DATELINE #88 NEW YORK
ALICE RICHMAN SCHACHNER

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TIME MARCHES BACKWARD...TO 1789

ANNCR: DATELINE: NEW YORK CITY -- PICTURES IN SOUND OF PEOPLE, PLACES AND EVENTS HERE IN THE UNITED STATES -- BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE VOICE OF AMERICA EACH WEEK (AT THIS TIME). TODAY A REPORT PREPARED BY ALICE RICHMAN SCHACHNER ON TIME MARCHING BACKWARDS. HOW DOES THAT WORK? LIKE THIS. A YEAR AGO, TIME MAGAZINE PUBLISHED A SPECIAL AMERICAN BICENTENNIAL ISSUE SHOWING HOW IT MIGHT HAVE REPORTED THE NEWS OF THE WEEK OF JULY 4, 1776. NOW, IN A SECOND SPECIAL ISSUE, TIME LOOKS AT STILL ANOTHER SIGNIFICANT CHAPTER OF AMERICAN HISTORY.

VOICE: TIME MAGAZINE DEVOTED ITS FIRST BICENTENNIAL ISSUE TO THE EVENTS WHICH SURROUNDED A GLORIOUS MOMENT IN AMERICAN HISTORY: THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE. BUT EVEN BEFORE THE ISSUE WENT TO PRESS, TIME'S EDITORS KNEW THAT THERE HAD TO BE A SEQUEL. INDEPENDENCE WAS ONLY THE BEGINNING. THE DATE THEY CHOSE WAS SEPTEMBER 26, 1789. IN THAT WEEK, CONGRESS PASSED THE AMENDMENTS TO THE U-S CONSTITUTION WHICH WOULD BE KNOWN AS THE BILL OF RIGHTS. THE AMENDMENTS HAD BEEN SPONSORED BY JAMES MADISON, CONGRESSMAN FROM VIRGINIA. WE MUST "FORTIFY THE RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE AGAINST THE ENCROACHMENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT," HE ARGUED. REPORTING AS THOUGH IT HAD BEEN ON THE SCENE, TIME WRITES THAT "IT WAS AN EVENT OF A CERTAIN MORAL SPLENDOR." AND THE MAGAZINE

VOICE: (CONT'D) OBSERVES THAT "PUBLIC OUTCRY HAD BEEN THE COMPELLING CAUSE OF THE AMENDMENTS."

NEWS TRAVELED VERY SLOWLY IN 1789. BUT AS TIME'S SENIOR EDITOR OTTO FRIEDRICH LEARNED THROUGH RESEARCH AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS SHOWED THAT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WERE VERY AWARE OF WHAT WAS HAPPENING:

TAPE: CUT ONE -- FRIEDRICH

"THE PEOPLE FELT VERY PASSIONATELY THAT THIS WAS SOMETHING THEY HAD TO HAVE. AND WHEN THE CONSTITUTION WAS CREATED AND IT DIDN'T HAVE THAT THEY REALLY BEGAN WORRYING VERY LOUDLY, SAYING THAT THERE WAS A DANGER THAT THEY MIGHT LOSE THEIR RIGHTS. THE FEDERALISTS, WHO HAD PUT THE CONSTITUTION THROUGH SAID: DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. 'THE WHOLE CONSTITUTION IS A BILL OF RIGHTS,' HAMILTON SAID. BUT THE PEOPLE BACK IN THE HOMETOWNS REALLY KEPT WORRYING ABOUT IT. THEY KEPT SENDING PETITIONS. IN FACT, BEFORE THE VARIOUS STATES RATIFIED THE CONSTITUTION A GREAT MANY OF THEM SAID: WE WILL RATIFY ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT YOU ARE GOING TO ADD A BILL OF RIGHTS. AND THEN THEY ADDED THE THINGS THEY WANTED. SO THERE WAS REALLY NO QUESTION THAT THERE WOULD BE A BILL OF RIGHTS AND THAT PEOPLE WANTED IT AND THEY KNEW WHY THEY WANTED IT."

VOICE: CONGRESS' ACTION CAPPED A FLURRY OF CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITY THAT SET THE YOUNG NATION ON ITS WAY. IN ITS LAW SECTION, TIME NOTES THAT LEGISLATION HAD BEEN APPROVED ESTABLISHING A FEDERAL JUDICIARY INCLUDING A SUPREME COURT. GEORGE WASHINGTON HAD BEEN PRESIDENT FOR ONLY FIVE MONTHS BUT EVEN HE WAS ENCOUNTERING SOME CRITICISM. "I WALK ON UNTRODDEN GROUND," HE SAID. "THERE IS SCARCELY ANY PART OF MY CONDUCT WHICH MAY NOT HEREAFTER BE DRAWN INTO PRECEDENT."

VOICE: (CONT'D) MOST OF THE MAJOR STORIES IN THIS SPECIAL ISSUE DEAL WITH THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CLIMATE OF THE UNITED STATES, IN 1789. BUT THE MAGIC CARPET OF HISTORY HAS ALSO PROVIDED "ON-THE-SPOT" ACCOUNTS OF INTERNATIONAL EVENTS.

TAPE: CUT TWO -- FRIEDRICH

"YOU HAVE TO TREAT THIS A LITTLE BIT AS A GAME BECAUSE THERE WASN'T A TIME MAGAZINE THEN. IF YOU LITERALLY PUT OUT A NEWS MAGAZINE OF 1789 WITH THE NEWS REPORTS OF 1789 YOU WOULDN'T HAVE ANYTHING. A LOT THAT HAPPENED THEN WASN'T KNOWN UNTIL MUCH LATER. NOTHING IS MADE UP IN THIS MAGAZINE. IT'S ALL HISTORICALLY ACCURATE. BUT WHAT WE DID WAS WE TOOK MATERIAL FROM A LOT OF DIFFERENT SOURCES, THE NEWSPAPERS OF THE TIME, THE JOURNALS, MEMOIRS AND SO FORTH, THEN WROTE THEM IN THE STYLE BASICALLY OF TIME'S REPORTERS OF TODAY."

VOICE: TIME REPORTS ON THE BOOKS WHICH WERE BEING READ, THE DANCES PEOPLE LIKE AND THE EARLY PUSH FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS. A GROWING NUMBER OF SETTLERS WERE ATTRACTED TO THE POSSIBILITIES OF LIFE WEST OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER AND SOME NEW YORKERS WERE EXPERIMENTING WITH AIR TRAVEL BY BALLOON. IT WAS A VIGOROUS AGE, FILLED WITH PROMISE. AND AS THIS SPECIAL BICENTENNIAL ISSUE REPORTS, THERE WAS GOOD REASON FOR OPTIMISM.

ANNCR: THIS HAS BEEN DATELINE: NEW YORK -- PICTURES IN SOUND OF PEOPLE, PLACES AND EVENTS HERE IN THE UNITED STATES, BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE VOICE OF AMERICA EACH WEEK AT THIS TIME. TODAY, YOU HEARD ABOUT TIME MAGAZINE'S SPECIAL ISSUE ON A GREAT MOMENT IN AMERICAN HISTORY....THE PASSAGE OF THE BILL OF RIGHTS. JOIN US AGAIN NEXT ----- FOR ANOTHER DATELINE.

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